

Capsule Summary  
SM-664  
Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
Wynne  
Private  
(Page 1)

c. 1900s

In 1896 Samuel and Mary Rawleigh purchased a two acre lot on a point of land overlooking Smith Creek and the Potomac River near Wynne, Maryland. The spot proved ideal for a steamboat wharf and soon attracted a number of associated maritime industries. In 1905, for instance the St. Mary's Packing and Manufacturing Company purchased the property and erected a series of buildings for the shucking and packing of oysters. In 1925 the company sold out to Charles R. Lewis who continued the operation for many years until he was bought out by the industrious Charles Davis. It was under Davis that the business was greatly expanded. As local author Clarence D. Bradburn noted and his wife Luella Davis concurred, Davis would eventually employ approximately 105 people.<sup>1</sup> Besides packing oysters during the winter time, Davis also ran a crab picking and steaming operation and even constructed an oyster crushing plant to grind oyster shells into lime which then could be used for fertilizing neighboring farm soils. During Davis' ownership the two acre parcel had grown to include an ice plant, store, warehouse, soft crab shed, oyster shucking and crab picking building, a steaming shed, and an office.

Several of these buildings remain today. An oyster shucking and crab picking shed, a warehouse for fertilizer, and an oyster crushing plant all resemble one another. Each of the long structures are oriented on an east/west axis, feature board-and-batten siding, and are sheathed with metal roofs. A small one story frame building situated near the present wharf once served as an office. Still used by current owner Thomas Courtney, these buildings recall over 100 years of

---

<sup>1</sup> Clarence D. Bradburn, Some Important People and Events in St. Mary's (N.p.: N.p., 1977), 69. Conversation with Luella Davis, August 1998. Much of the details about the facility were explained by Ms. Davis.

Capsule Summary  
SM-664  
Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
Wynne  
Private  
(Page 2)

c. 1900s

maritime activity in Wynne as well as St. Mary's County. With the decline of oysters in the Potomac River and the corresponding decrease in watermen, very few of these facilities survive intact and remain in use. The combination of these buildings, therefore, document a rapidly disappearing landscape.

SM-664, Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
St. Mary's County  
Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:

Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930  
Modern Period, 1930-present

Historic Period Theme:

Architecture  
Economic  
Social/Education/Cultural  
Transportation

Resource Type

Category:

Building

Historic Environment:

Rural waterfront

Historic Function and Use:

Oyster Packing Plant  
Crab Picking and Packing Facility  
Shell Crushing Plant  
Steamship Wharf

Known Design Source:

None

**Maryland Historical Trust**  
**State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. SM-664

Magi No.

DOE \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Part of Manning's Hold, St. Mary's Packing & Manufacturing Co.,

and/or common Davis Oyster Packing Plant (pref.)

**2. Location**

street & number End of Wynne Road, overlooking Smith Creek and Potomac River \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Wynne x\_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 1

state Md county St. Mary's TM-70, G-15, P-19

**3. Classification**

| Category         | Ownership                 | Status                | Present Use                           |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| ___ district     | ___ public                | x___ occupied         | ___ agriculture ___ museum            |
| x___ building(s) | x___ private              | ___ unoccupied        | x___ commercial ___ park              |
| ___ structure    | ___ both                  | ___ work in progress  | ___ educational ___ private residence |
| ___ site         | <b>Public Acquisition</b> | <b>Accessible</b>     | ___ entertainment ___ religious       |
| ___ object       | ___ in process            | x___ yes: restricted  | ___ government ___ scientific         |
|                  | ___ being considered      | ___ yes: unrestricted | ___ industrial ___ transportation     |
|                  | x___ not applicable       | ___ no                | ___ military ___ other:               |

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Thomas L. Courtney

street & number 48290 Wynne Rd. telephone no.: 301-872-4403

city, town Ridge state and zip code Md 20680

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. St. Mary's County Courthouse liber MRB 83

street & number folio 139

city, town Leonardtown state Md

**6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys**

title

date \_\_\_ federal \_\_\_ state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. SM-664

|  |                                       |   |   |                    |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|--------------------|
| <b>Condition</b>                         |                                       | <b>Check one</b>                            | <b>Check one</b>                                  |                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent       | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved                    | date of move _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair            | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed    |   |   |                    |

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resource Count: 5

The Davis Oyster Packing Plant, situated at the end of Wynne Road overlooking the confluence of the Potomac River and Smith Creek, is located in Wynne, Maryland. The Plant consists of a series of buildings including an office, general store (now a family restaurant), an oyster shucking/crab picking house, two warehouses and several non-contributing campers. Generally oriented on an east/west axis, this complex of buildings reside on a flat, 3.1 acre tract. Several residences, Scheibles Restaurant, Smith Creek, and the Potomac River border the property. Old foundations and cement pads from several previous buildings are located near many of the buildings.

The old general store of the Davis Oyster Packing Plant is currently Courtney's Restaurant. As with most of the buildings on the property, the old general store was built in the 1940s. This one story cinder block building exhibits a false parapet front on the south/primary elevation that hides the flat roof. This side is pierced by three picture windows and three modern doors -- apparently the original fenestration. The interior has been extensively modified to accommodate the present restaurant business.

The fertilizer warehouse is situated just to the south of the old general store. This board-and-batten clad, red building with a corrugated metal roof is still used as a warehouse. According to Thomas Courtney, the building was once located on the wharf and was used for storage there. Repeated storms and a crumbling wharf precipitated moving the building back from the water. The building does feature opposing, sliding door entries on the north and south sides. All of the elevations, except for the east, are pierced by a number of unglazed, swinging wood windows that can be propped open or barred shut. The interior consists of an open space used largely for storage.

Another warehouse lies to the north of the old general store. This building does not feature as many openings as the previous structure as it features a pair of garage door openings on the south side and a single garage door on the north side. Intermittent six-pane windows are situated near the eaves around the building. Rimmed by a poured concrete foundation, the frame building is sheathed with board-and-batten siding. Two metal ventilators project from the building's corrugated metal covered roof. A small shed roof addition lies on the west side of the structure. Like the aforementioned warehouse, the interior consists of an open space used for storage.

To the west of the old general store is a small, one story, three bay, frame office with a gable roof. The office was constructed on a poured concrete foundation. This foundation supports a circular sawn frame that is currently covered with aluminum siding. The roof, pierced by a single chimney flue, is sheathed with asphalt shingles. The primary entry is located on the building's east elevation. This door is flanked on either side by a slender one-over-one, double-hung sash window. Two one-over-one windows pierce the south side of the building and one, one-over-one window lights the west side.

The only remaining work building remaining from the Davis Oyster Packing Plant is the Oyster Shucking/Crab Picking building that occupies the northernmost boundary of the property. This long, one story building was built on a poured concrete foundation. The exterior is sheathed

# 8. Significance

Survey No. SM-664

|   |  |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>Period</b>                             | <b>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</b> |   |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric      | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric      | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning     | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499        | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic         | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation           | <input type="checkbox"/> law                    | <input type="checkbox"/> science         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599        | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture                 | <input type="checkbox"/> economics              | <input type="checkbox"/> literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture     | <input type="checkbox"/> education              | <input type="checkbox"/> military               | <input type="checkbox"/> social/         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799        | <input type="checkbox"/> art                         | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> music                  | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce         | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy             | <input type="checkbox"/> theater         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government    | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation  |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> invention              |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

## Specific dates

## Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

In 1896 Samuel and Mary Rawleigh purchased a two acre lot on a point of land overlooking Smith Creek and the Potomac River near Wynne, Maryland. The spot proved ideal for a steamboat wharf and soon attracted a number of associated maritime industries. In 1905, for instance the St. Mary's Packing and Manufacturing Company purchased the property and erected a series of buildings for the shucking and packing of oysters. In 1925 the company sold out to Charles R. Lewis who continued the operation for many years until he was bought out by the industrious Charles Davis in the 1940s. It was under Davis that the business was greatly expanded. As local author Clarence D. Bradburn noted and his wife Luella Davis concurred, Davis would eventually employ approximately 105 people.<sup>1</sup> Besides packing oysters during the winter time, Davis also ran a crab picking and steaming operation and even constructed an oyster crushing plant to grind oyster shells into lime that then could be used for fertilizing neighboring farm soils. During Davis' ownership the two acre parcel had grown to include an ice plant, store, warehouse, soft crab shed, oyster shucking and crab picking building, a steaming shed, and an office.

Several of these buildings remain today. An oyster shucking and crab picking shed, a warehouse for fertilizer, and an oyster crushing plant all resemble one another. Each of the long structures are oriented on an east/west axis, feature board-and-batten siding, and are sheathed with metal roofs. A small one story frame building situated near the present wharf once served as an office. Still used by current owner Thomas Courtney, these buildings recall over 100 years of maritime activity in Wynne as well as St. Mary's County. With the decline of oysters in the Potomac River and the corresponding decrease in watermen, very few of these facilities survive intact and remain in use. The combination of these buildings, therefore, document a rapidly disappearing landscape.

<sup>1</sup> Clarence D. Bradburn, Some Important People and Events in St. Mary's (N.p.: N.p., 1977), 69. Conversation with Luella Davis, August 1998. Much of the details about the facility were explained by Ms. Davis.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-664

See Significance 8.0.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3.1 acresQuadrangle name St. George IslandQuadrangle scale 1:24 000UTM References do NOT complete UTM referencesA 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

  
Zone Easting NorthingB 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

  
Zone Easting NorthingC 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

D 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

E 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

F 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

G 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

H 

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Same as per deed description.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk E. Ranzetta, Historic Sites Surveyororganization St. Mary's County Dept. of Planning & Zoningdate 8-17-98street & number 22740 Washington Streettelephone 301-475-4662city or town Leonardtownstate Md

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DHCP/DHCD  
100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023  
514-7600

SM-664, Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
St. Mary's County  
7.1 Description

with board-and-batten siding and the roof is covered with raised seam metal. Two metal ventilators pierce the roof. A concrete pad for the no longer extant crab steaming apparatus lies just south of the building's southwest corner and east of a neighboring wharf.

The fenestration of the building is actually limited to a series of now boarded over windows, a six-over-six window, a small six pane window, and three large doors on the south side, two six-over-six windows and a small swinging door pierce the west gable end, a single swinging door opening pierces the north side, and two doors and a boarded over window and two doors light the east elevation.

While much of the interior has been modified for its current storage use, the main work area of the plant can be seen on the building's north side. Here, a long space with a series of counters were aligned with the building's east/west axis. Due to the lack of windows on the north side of the building, however, a series of thirteen skylights were installed to provide adequate light. According to Thomas Courtney, the space was used during the winter for shucking oysters and during the summers for picking crabs. The building also contains a large refrigerator on the east side.



SM-664, Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
St. Mary's County  
8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber MRB 83, Folio 139

Grantee: Thomas L. Courtney

Grantor: Stanley and Peggy Ann Raley

Date: October 27, 1980

Notes: The deed notes that the property contains 4.842 acres. A survey by Thomas R. Koval completed on February 24, 1960 is also mentioned.

Reference: Liber 166, Folio 237

Grantee: Stanley and Peggy Ann Raley

Grantor: G. I. Rupert Lore and Sons, Inc.

Date: February 24, 1960

Notes: In the boundary description for the property the Charles E. Davis Shell Crushing Plant Building is mentioned.

Reference: Liber CBG 97, Folio 314

Grantee: G.I. Rupert Lore and Sons, Inc.

Grantor: Charles E. Davis, et ux

Date: September 30, 1951

Reference: Liber CBG 16, Folio 175

Grantee: Charles E. Davis

Grantor: Charles R. Lewis, Jr. et ux

Date: April 15, 1944

Reference: Liber JMM 3, Folio 63

Grantee: Charles R. Lewis, Jr., et ux

Grantor: St. Mary's Packing and Manufacturing Company of St. Mary's County

Date: March 21, 1925

Notes: Here the tract contains 2 acres.

Reference: Liber EBA 20, Folio 526

Grantee: St. Mary's Packing and Manufacturing Company of St. Mary's County

Grantor: St. Mary's Packing and Manufacturing Company of Baltimore City

Date: September 24, 1921

Reference: Liber EBA 5, Folio 76

Grantee: The St. Mary's Packing and Manufacturing Co. of Baltimore City

Grantor: George P. and Lucile J. Bailey and Joseph T. and Laura C. Smith

Date: June 9, 1905

SM-664, Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
St. Mary's County  
8.2 Significance

Reference: Liber EBA 3, Folio 120

Grantee: George P. Bailey and Joseph T. Smith (Bailey and Smith)

Grantor: Mabel Louisa Rawleigh, Mary Clara Barga and George Barga

Date: March 3, 1903

Notes: According to the deed after the death of Mary C. Rawleigh her two daughters Mabel and Mary inherited the property.

Reference: Liber JJG 3, Folio 430

Grantee: Mary C. Rawleigh (wife of Samuel L. Rawleigh)

Grantor: Ann M. Abell

Date: April 23, 1896

Notes: The two acre lot is subdivided here from the larger parcel called "Manning's Hold."

Reference: Liber JFF 6, Folio 62

Grantee: Ann M. Abell

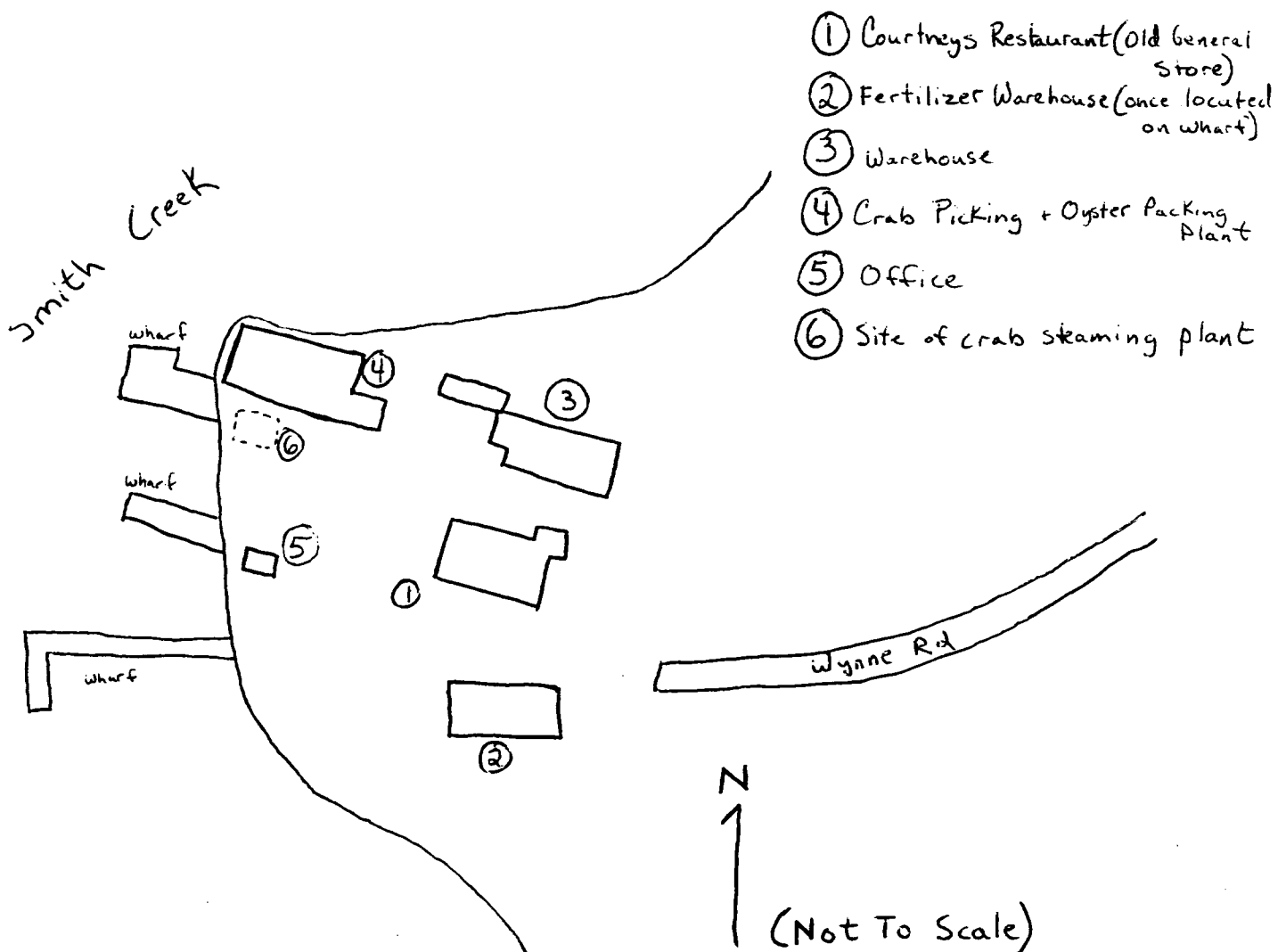
Grantor: Allen C. Tyler

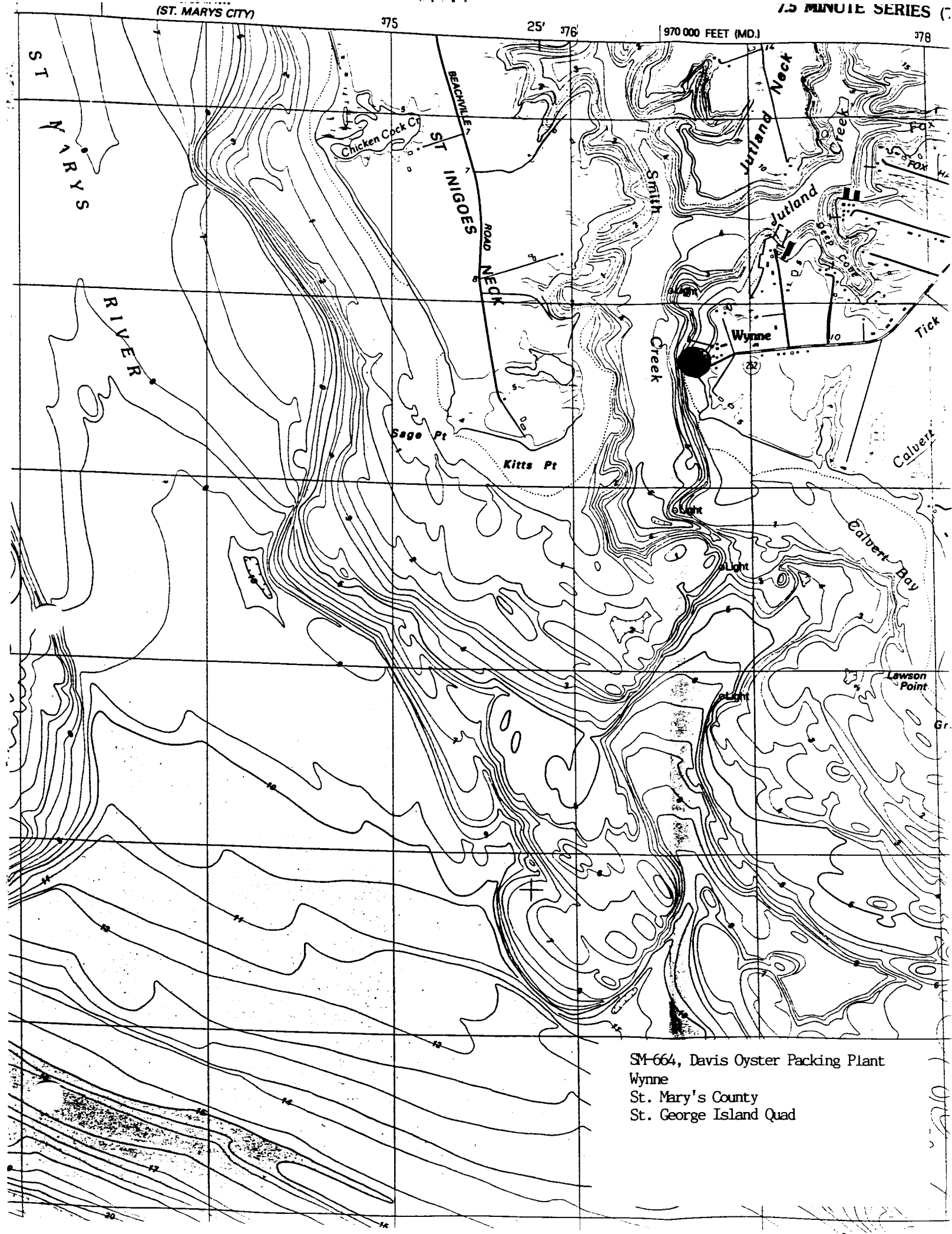
Date: August 31, 1882

Notes: After a decision by the county circuit court in the case David W. Tyler's Exec. v Oliver N. Evans et al, the 120 acre tract called Manning's Hold is sold at auction.

SM-664, Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
St. Mary's County  
8.3 Significance

SM-664, Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
Wynne, Maryland  
Site Plan





SM-664, Davis Oyster Packing Plant  
Wynne  
St. Mary's County  
St. George Island Quad







SM-664

Davis Ogden Furling Fleet

St. Mary's Church

Kirk Paine II

King/12

4 J. 240

initialize database E + N elevations

2 of 4





CM-664

MD SNP

Aug/98

